



NAXOS

SUPPÉ

Mozart

Incidental Music



Julie Svěcená,
Violin

Janáček
Philharmonic
Orchestra

Dario Salvi



Franz von Suppé (1819–1895)

Mozart • Die Afrikareise: Overture

Franz von Suppé (or should we say Francesco Ermenegildo Ezechiele Cavaliere Suppé-Demelli) was born in Dalmatia, a distant relative of Gaetano Donizetti. He is universally famous for the glorious overtures *Light Cavalry* and *Poet and Peasant*. Having studied music from a young age, he went to Vienna and became part of the Theater an der Wien, directed by Franz Pokorny. He had to learn German, and became a very successful composer of operetta and other stage works over the next 50 years. With Johann Strauss II, Carl Joseph Millöcker, Richard Genee and Carl Zeller, he represents the Golden Age of Viennese Operetta.

Mozart (1854)

Schauspiel in vier Aufzügen

Among Suppé's great output was incidental music for many popular plays, including the one represented here: *Mozart* by Leonhard Wohlmut (1823–1889), produced at the Theater an der Wien on 23 September 1854, one of nine stage works completed by the composer that year. It is an example of a *Künstler-Lebensbild* ('life portrait of an artist'). Here, the music underlines and accompanies the action on stage, so functions rather more prominently than intermittent pieces of incidental music.

The overture to the play, recorded in its entirety for the first time here, has a ternary structure, opening and closing with the Act III march from *Le nozze di Figaro* (*Ecco la marcia*). The content is a potpourri, but conveys the serious concerns of the drama. The first part emphasises the love interest between Mozart and his wife Constanze: the search (*Wer ein Liebchen hat gefunden* from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), the courtship (*Don Giovanni's* serenade *Deh, vieni alla finestra*). The ever-present threat of mutability and mortality makes an appearance in the eschatological music of the statue in *Don Giovanni*, with a brief reference to the magic of *Die Zauberflöte*. The joys of life return with references to the dance (*Se vuol ballare* from *Figaro* and the minuet from *Don Giovanni*), Papageno's magic glockenspiel, and the rapture of wine in Don Giovanni's *Champagne Aria*, before the return of the reassuring march.

The various acts unfold the story of the composition of some of Mozart's operas and of the Requiem, as a comment on the composer's life and work. The *Concertino* (with its beautiful A minor movement) presents a miniature violin concerto with variations on love themes (especially Belmonte's opening aria from *Die Entführung*) and Don Giovanni's seduction of Zerlina (*La ci darem la mano*). *Aphorism* takes us to the world of operatic production (*Die Schauspieldirektor*), followed by a movement leading us into Mozart's later life with fleeting themes from *Die Zauberflöte*, the innocent joy of Papageno overtaken by the serious hymn *O Isis und Osiris* and the three solemn Masonic chords. The late *Symphony No. 39* accompanies the *Bestellungen* of the Requiem, with the *Schauspiel-direktor* now in the minor key. The penultimate act *Fantasie* moves into the dark world of deathly intimation, the music of the Requiem gradually taking over with the *Tuba mirum* from the *Dies irae*. Suppé's original music is prominent here, and the extended trombone recitative (clearly modelled on Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable Overture* of 1831, with its evocation of the afterlife), is emphasised by the organ writing – all culminating in the full statement of the *Lacrimosa*. The final *Erklärung* in the light of death has reference to *Violin Sonata No. 33*, with a sinister atmosphere generated by mysterious string tremolos and the organ with sudden *forte* chords.

Synopsis

Right after the *Overture* [1](#) Amadeus tells his mother, Anna, about his plan to leave Salzburg and asks her for some help in convincing his father to let him go. His father, Leopold, returns home from rehearsals complaining about the poor standard of music under his new master. Leopold and Anna both see that remaining in such a place would be a mistake for Amadeus, but are worried that the Archbishop will not grant him leave.

A messenger, Simon, delivers a letter from the Court. The letter bears bad news: no leave is granted to Mozart. Leopold decides that it is time for his son to leave and try his luck somewhere else. Anna is happy but has a premonition: she will not see her son in this life again. After a touching farewell, Mozart leaves [2](#).

Aloysia enters the room, wondering about Mozart's strange behaviour over the past few days. Is he in love with her, or with her sister, Constanze? Constanze enters the rooms and does not seem her usual self. In conversation with Aloysia, she reveals that she is in love for the first time in her life – with Mozart. Mozart arrives, looking unhappy. He does not want to be appreciated only as an artist; he needs love and support, and someone to share his life with him. He decides to tell Aloysia, who seizes the opportunity to make him understand that he needs someone to love him, and someone to love in return – that someone being Constanze. Aloysia leaves. Alone, Mozart reflects on what has just happened and his heart is once again filled with hope for a positive future [3]. Constanze returns. Mozart and Constanze discuss their feelings for one another. Mozart tests the ground, announcing his imminent departure. Constanze cries: these are tears of love. Mozart declares his love, as does Constanze. Leopold arrives bringing the bad news that Anna has died. Leopold then tells them that Emperor Joseph intends to create a German National Theatre in Vienna and wants Mozart to compose for it [4].

Constanze and Aloysia meet in the former's house. Aloysia is not happy in her marriage and worries that Constanze is living in the same situation. Constanze reassures her. They have both returned from the theatre, where they have just watched the opening performance of *Le nozze di Figaro* which was sabotaged by the performers, led by Salieri.

Haydn arrives to show his support for Mozart [5]. He loved *Figaro* and he could see the on-stage cabal. Haydn tells Mozart that he thinks *Figaro* is astonishing and that it places Mozart as the best composer of the time. Not only that, Emperor Joseph has sent Haydn as a messenger to let Mozart know that from this moment on he will be protected from the enemies of his art. This instils Mozart with confidence for the future and he starts planning his next work, *Don Giovanni*. The comedic figure of Schikaneder enters the scene. He is desperate, as his theatre is in ruin. Everyone wants only to see *Figaro* and nobody is attending his suburban theatre. The only solution he sees is to ask Mozart for a new work for his company, something that everyone can enjoy and understand. They decide on a mythological opera in German called *Die Zauberflöte*. Schikaneder leaves. Mozart is interrupted by yet another visitor, Count Waldsee, who neglects to introduce himself. He tells Mozart that his wife has recently passed away and that he would like Mozart to compose a Requiem for her soul. Mozart is confused by this hasty visit and commission. He sees the Requiem as being a sign from heaven, and feels that the Requiem is really for himself.

Aloysia and Constanze meet in Mozart's room [6]. It looks like a crypt, gloomy and dark. They discuss how all of his latest successes – his three best operas – could have changed his life for the better if he had not isolated himself from the world to compose the Requiem. Mozart returns to his room, a ghostly shadow of his former self. He is saddened by the death of the dear monarch and desires nothing more than to complete the Requiem and be reunited with Emperor Joseph. Constanze returns, refusing to hand back the manuscript of the Requiem which she had taken away previously at Mozart's request [7]. She fears that if Mozart completes it, he will soon die. Mozart persuades her to fetch it, allowing him to fulfil his last earthly task. After a long speech about the mystical reasons behind his hard work on the Requiem, Mozart collapses to the floor and dies as the curtain falls.

Die Afrikareise: Overture (1883)

The original form of the overture to Suppé's operetta *Die Afrikareise* (1883) is presented here, reconstructed from the original manuscript. Suppé withdrew it when he omitted the piece *Das Vergissmeinnicht*, included in the overture, from Act II. It differs from the extended miscellany of melodies later put together by Paul Lincke, which lacks the structure and focus Suppé always brought to his overture writing.

The original *Overture* is bright, energetic and tautly controlled, and produces a remarkable effect. The concept of tourism was much in the air at the time, not least because of the extraordinary novels of travel adventure by Jules Verne (1828–1905) that were being turned into opera scenarios (Offenbach's *Le Voyage dans la lune* of 1875 as well as Suppé's own *Die Reise um Die Erde in 80 Tagen* of 1875 and *Der Courier des Czaren* of 1877 after *Michael Strogoff*).

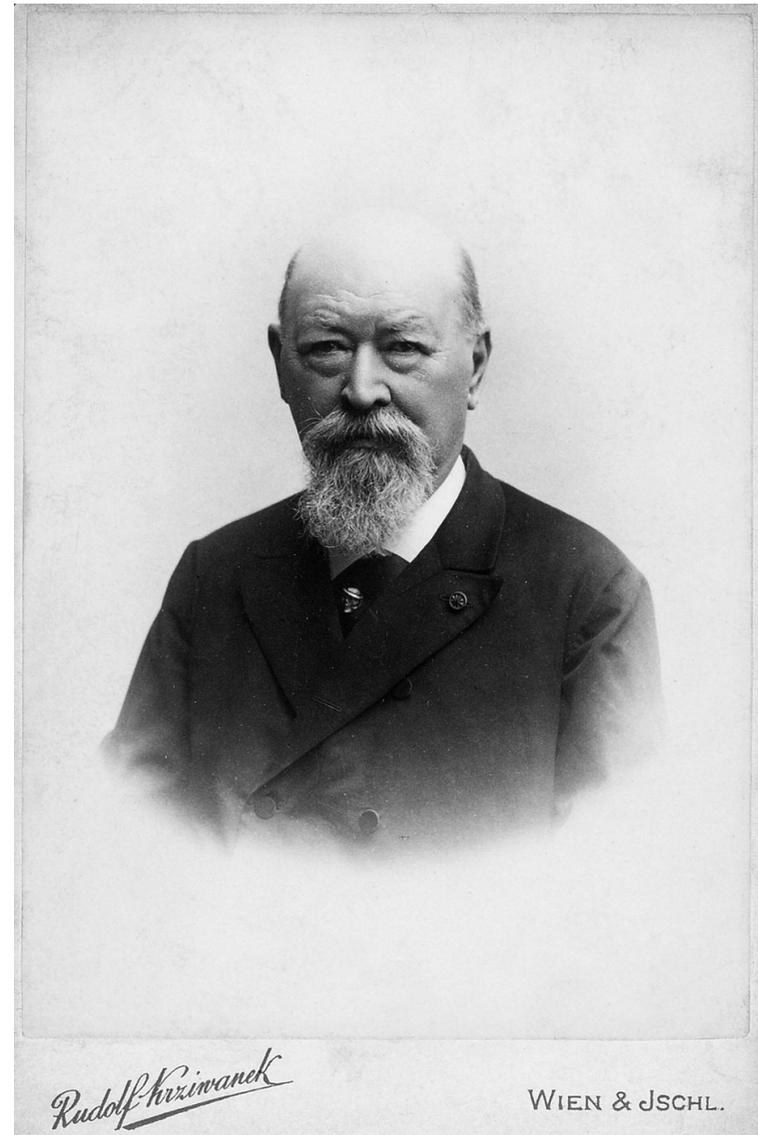
The *Overture* is in five parts and presents a little tone poem about the mystique of travel and adventure and all they involve. It begins with a bright elegant French theme, with the horn transitioning into a dreamy wistful melody with tender answering refrains. It broadens into an emotional climax before launching a busy elegant gavotte passage with prominent woodwind writing, and a hint of the *Ländler*. This opens on to one of Suppé's typically ingratiating Viennese waltz movements. After an exciting build up, this bursts into a charming march punctuated by trumpet fanfares leading to the brisk exhilarating coda.

The opening presents the desire for expedition, with wistful dreams of faraway places and happy times. A perky spirit of adventure asserts itself. Full-scale happy tourism unfolds in the *gemütliche* waltz, with a final joyful, even exuberant, celebration of the wonderful journey to Africa.

Robert Ignatius Letellier, Dario Salvi

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Franz von Suppé (1890)

Julie Svěcená



Since winning the Concertino Praga – Antonín Dvořák International Radio Competition for Young Musicians in 2010, Julie Svěcená has performed extensively throughout Europe, Asia and North America. As a soloist, Svěcená has appeared with the Prague Symphony Orchestra, Slovak State Philharmonic Košice, Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra and the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra among others. She is a prizewinner of numerous competitions such as the Tibor Varga International Violin Competition and the International Georg Philipp Telemann Violin Competition, and has performed at the Sion, Tokyo Stradivarius, Residart and Prague Spring International Music festivals. Svěcená's musical collaborations include prestigious artists such as Trevor Pinnock, Gábor Takács-Nagy, Semyon Bychkov and Rohan de Silva. She graduated from the Prague Conservatoire under the guidance of the Czech pedagogue Dana Vlachová, and continued her studies in London, graduating with a Master of Arts degree and Advanced Diploma from the Royal Academy of Music, in the class of Rodney Friend MBE.

www.svecena.com/en

Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo: Dita Pepe



The Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra dates back to the first half of the 20th century and the founding of a radio orchestra in Ostrava, which saw performances with Hindemith, Prokofiev and Stravinsky. In 1954 the orchestra was officially established as the Ostrava Symphony Orchestra and quickly rose to prominence, culminating with its first international tour five years after its founding. Many world-renowned conductors and soloists have made their artistic contribution to the orchestra since then, including Sir Charles Mackerras, Karel Ančerl, Mariss Jansons, Sviatoslav Richter and Rudolf Firkušný, to name a few. Within the last five years the orchestra has toured extensively within Europe, as well as in China and South Korea. It has performed at such prestigious venues as the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Musikverein Vienna, Philharmonie Berlin, NOSPR Katowice, Gasteig Munich and numerous others. Petr Popelka is the principal guest conductor as of the 2020–21 season, and regular guest conductors include Christian Arming, Daniel Raiskin, Risto Joost, Gabriel Babeselea and Lukasz Borowicz. The prominent Russian conductor Vassily Sinaisky is the orchestra's artistic director and principal conductor.

Dario Salvi



Dario Salvi is a Scottish-Italian conductor, musicologist and researcher who specialises in the restoration and performance of rare works. Salvi conducts symphonic works, ballet, opera and operettas across Europe, the Middle East and the US. His passion is the rediscovery and performance of long-forgotten masterpieces. He is currently collaborating with Naxos on recordings of Romantic ballets and a series on Auber's overtures and orchestral music. Other important projects include recording Viennese operettas by Johann Strauss II, Franz von Suppé, Carl Michael Ziehrer and others, as well as completing world premiere recordings of works by Giacomo Meyerbeer and Engelbert Humperdinck. Salvi has also written books on Viennese operetta, published new musical editions of operas and is a lifetime honorary member of The Johann Strauss Society of Great Britain.

www.dariosalvi.com

Universally famous for his glorious overtures *Light Cavalry* and *Poet and Peasant* (Naxos 8.553935), Franz von Suppé was one of the greatest exponents of the Golden Age of Viennese Operetta. But he was also a master of incidental music for popular plays, one of which is *Mozart* – an example of *Künstler-Lebensbild* ('life portrait of an artist'). Suppé's music subtly accompanies the stage action as the story of the composition of Mozart's music unfolds, offering a potpourri of Mozart's works served up with Suppé's trademark flair. *Die Afrikareise* presents a piquant and brilliant travelogue.



Franz von
SUPPÉ
(1819–1895)
Mozart

Mozart (1854)

Play in four acts – Incidental music

51:31

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|---|----------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Overture | 9:47 |
| 2 | Act I: Szena nach dem Vorspiel | 1:27 |
| 3 | Act I: Concertino | 9:02 |
| 4 | Act II: Liebe | 5:05 |
| 5 | Act II: Aphorism | 5:03 |
| 6 | Act III: Bestellungen | 2:38 |
| 7 | Act IV: Fantasie | 8:12 |
| 8 | Act IV: Erklärung | 10:07 |
| 9 | Die Afrikareise: Overture (1883) | 6:06 |

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

Julie Svěcená, Violin 3 • Pavel Rybka, Organ 7 8
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and *Franz von Suppé* (1864) (photomontage by Dario Salvi, 2021)

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